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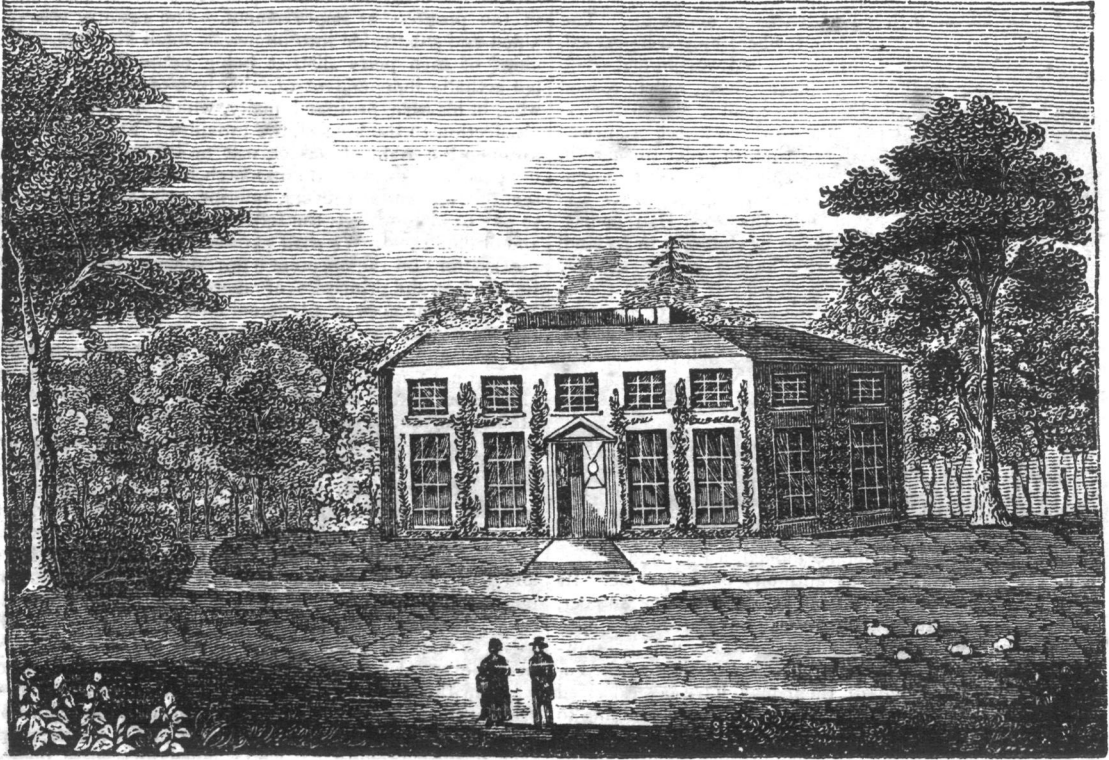
THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY P. DIXON HARDY, M.R.I.A.

VOL. IV.

JULY 25, 1835.

No. 160.



TULLYMORE LODGE.

Although the line of road leading from Ballymena to Tullymore is uninteresting to an antiquarian, and does not present to his view any ruined castles or fortresses, or other remnants of the "olden time;" yet to the eye of the lover of good order and civilization it presents a scene of no common interest. It passes through a rich and well cultivated valley, ornamented with wood, adorned with numerous handsome villas, and watered by the river Main, on whose banks are several bleach-greens, affording regular employment to numbers of the peasantry.

On a fine morning in the month of July, accompanied by a friend, I set out from Ballymena, on a tour through this part of the county of Antrim. After a pleasant drive of three miles we reached Broughshane, a small neat village, and then proceeded to Tullymore, the subject of the above engraving, and the residence of the Hon. J. B. O'Neill, one of the members of Parliament for the County of Antrim, and brother to the earl of the same name. An account of this ancient family has been given in a preceding number of your Journal: in reference to it I would remark, that what was stated there of the Earl being the *only* male descendant of the family, is incorrect, as there are other members still living.

The house is built of cut stone, and is plain, but handsome. It is situated in the midst of the demesne, which is well ornamented by elms and oak trees, some of which have attained a considerable size. In the house are some good paintings. The gardens are well laid out, and rather extensive. This part of the country was formerly possessed by the sept of the McQuillans; and it is said that they had a castle here, but at present no remains are visible.

L. B.

MOORE'S HISTORY OF IRELAND.

SECOND NOTICE.

In the preceding article we mentioned, that in the most distant ages of Irish tradition this island had obtained the appellation of "Sacred," a name conferred on her by the Phenicians, who had made Ireland the seat in the western seas, of "that most ancient superstition," which they introduced from the east, mingled with the primitive worship of the Celtic tribes. There exist to this day numerous traces of this worship—in the cromleachs, the pillar stones, and other relics of the Druidical ritual, to be found in every part of the country. The names of places, "those significant memorials, by which a whole history is sometimes conveyed in a single word," retain vestiges of the ancient idolatry. Many of our mountains, as well as remains of art, bear names, signifying their connexion with the worship of the sun and moon. Like the Persians, the Pagan Irish offered divine honours to fire; they revered water also, and ascribed peculiar sanctity to their boundaries, and to their mountains. This sense of awe was preserved amongst them for many centuries: so late as the time of Henry VIII. an historian observes, that the laws of the English were without scruple disobeyed, while those they passed "in their hills" were observed with inviolable fidelity. Mr. Moore gives it as his opinion, that the first preachers of Christianity took advantage of these feelings of the Irish, and that without hurting their prejudices, they endeavoured to connect the truths of the new religion with their respect for the emblems of the old. To this regard of the early missionaries to the religious feelings of the Irish, he attri-

butes the unexampled circumstance, that not one drop of martyr blood was shed in Ireland, during the entire course of that great revolution, the adoption by the whole people of a new creed.* The festivals of the heathen superstition became the celebration of the Christian worship: the Pagan feast at the vernal equinox coincided with the sacrifice of Easter, and the fires of the summer solstice are continued to the present day in commemoration of the eve of St. John.

"At every step, indeed, the transition to a new faith was smoothed by such coincidences or adoptions. The convert saw in the baptismal font, where he was immersed, the sacred well at which his fathers had worshipped. The Druidical stone on the "high places" bore, rudely graven upon it, the name of the Redeemer; and it was in general by the side of those ancient pillar-towers—whose origin was even then, perhaps, a mystery—that, in order to share in the solemn feelings which they inspired, the Christian temples arose. With the same view, the Sacred Grove was anew consecrated to religion, and the word *Dair*, or oak, so often combined with the names of churches in Ireland, sufficiently marks the favourite haunts of the idolatry which they superseded. In some instances, the accustomed objects of former worship were associated, even more intimately, with the new faith; and the order of Druidesses, as well as the idolatry which they practised, seemed to be revived, or rather continued, by the Nuns of St. Bridget, in their inextinguishable fire and miraculous oak at Kildare."

In all partially civilized nations, the priests are the sole possessors of the science of the time; thus, in those distant ages, all the knowledge which had yet reached Ireland, was confined to the Druids. The extent of their acquirements was, however, greater than is generally supposed. The Irish language is, indeed, a high and irrefragable evidence of the great antiquity of the people. Its alphabet consists of but sixteen letters, the same number, and the same letters, which Cadmus introduced into Athens from Phenicia. The use of letters, it is acknowledged, was known in Ireland before the time of St. Patrick. The knowledge of them may have been derived from Gaul; but there are many circumstances tending to refer the acquirement of the art of writing to the source whence they had obtained so much of their religious tenets and observances—the same source whence the Greeks obtained the same boon—open to the people of this island by their intercourse with the Phenician traders. The art, in those remote ages, was rude and imperfect: they wrote with an iron pencil, or stylus, on tablets of beechwood. The oldest Irish manuscript in existence is supposed to have been written in the ninth century; and the absence of all earlier records is objected to the statement, that before that period the people were acquainted with letters. But the scarcity of manuscripts can be very readily accounted for in a country perpetually inflamed by internal discord, and harassed by foreign invasion. There cannot be the slightest doubt that such records existed, and were in the hands of the later compilers of annals, from whom we derive our information. The accuracy with which an eclipse of the sun is described to have taken place in the year 664, and which has been confirmed by the calculations of astronomers, proves that it must have been recorded by an eye-witness, since the state of the science of astronomy, for many centuries after, renders impossible the supposition that this could have been an interpolation of a succeeding age. The Druids, it would appear, had some acquaintance with astronomy: they made an attempt to reconcile the lengths of the lunar and solar years by intercalating; and their three great festivals were held at such regular periods as would imply a certain knowledge of the equinoctial and solstitial points, and some approach to a correct division of time. It has

been supposed, too, that the cromleachs and Druids' circles were employed as observatories, as well as places of worship; and the name of "Celestial Indexes," given to the round towers, it is thought by some, denotes their application to astronomical purposes.

The form of the government of Ireland, and the nature of her laws, which continued with but little variations from the earliest period of which we have record, down to the occupation of the English, were but ill-calculated to elevate the character of her people, or to advance them in the progress of improvement. The country was divided and subdivided into numerous small kingdoms—the chief of each petty district being nominally subject to, but actually independent of, the lord of the principality, who, in his turn, professed fealty, which, at the best, was disaffection to the king of the province. Every chieftain assumed the right of making war on his own account, on his equals, or even on the monarch himself; and the system of tribute, which every inferior prince was called on to pay to his lord, was the fertile cause of continual feuds and of bloodshed. We shall extract Mr. Moore's eloquent observations on the effects of a government thus miserably founded on the principles of anarchy: and on the inevitable consequences of perpetual civil contests, in retarding the civilization of the people.

"So many contrivances, as they would seem, for discord, could not but prove successful. All the defects of the feudal system were here combined, without any of its atoning advantages. It is true that an executive composed of such divided and mutually thwarting powers must have left to the people a considerable portion of freedom; but it was a freedom, under its best aspects, stormy and insecure, and which life was passed in struggling for, not in enjoying. The dynasts themselves, being, from their position, both subjects and rulers, were, by turns, tyrants and slaves: even the monarchy itself was often regarded but as a prize to the strongest; and faction pervaded all ranks, from the hovel to the supreme throne. Accordingly, as may be gathered from even the comparatively pacific events I have selected, commotion and bloodshed were, in those times, the ordinary course of public affairs. Among the numerous occupants of thrones, the tenure of authority and of life was alike brief; and it is computed that, of the supreme kings who wielded the sceptre, before the introduction of Christianity, not one seventh part died a natural death, the remaining sovereigns having been taken off in the field, or by murder. The same rivalry, the same temptations to violence, were in operation throughout all the minor sovereignties: every provincial king, every head of a sept, had his own peculiar sphere of turbulence, in which, on a smaller scale, the same scenes were enacted; in which the law furnished the materials of strife, and the sword alone was called in to decide it.

"Under any circumstances, so general and constant a state of warfare must, by rendering impossible the cultivation of the peaceful arts, prove fatal to the moral advancement of the people; but the civil and domestic nature of the feuds in which the Irish were constantly engaged, could not but render them, beyond all other species of warfare, demoralising and degrading. To the invasion of a foreign land men march with a spirit of adventure, which throws an air of chivalry even around rapine and injustice; while they who resist, even to the death, any invasion of their own, are sure of enlisting the best feelings of human nature in their cause. But the sanguinary broils of a nation armed against itself have no one elevating principle to redeem them, and are inglorious alike in victory and defeat. Whatever gives dignity to other warfare was wanting in these personal, factious feuds. The peculiar bitterness attributed to family quarrels marks also the course of civil strife; and that flow of generous feeling which so often succeeds to fierce hostility between strangers, has rarely, if ever, been felt by parties of the same state who have been once arrayed in arms against each other. One of the worst results, indeed, of that system of law and government under which Ireland first started into political existence, and retained, in full vigour of abuse, for much more than a thousand years, was the constant obstacles which it presented to the growth of a public national spirit, by separating the mass of the peo-

* It will be perceived, that we have noticed Mr. Moore's work merely in a literary point of view, without any reference to the religious or political opinions which he has brought forward. With regard to what he says relative to St. Patrick we would observe, that there is a considerable difference of opinion among learned men as to the identity of the real St. Patrick, and the time in which he lived.

ple into mutually hostile tribes, and accustoming each to merge all thought of the general peace or welfare in its own factious views, or the gratification of private revenge."

But the laws of property, the basis of order and of all good government, seem as if framed for the very purpose of thwarting that natural ambition of the human mind, which ever seeks to rise above its present level. Under such laws of inheritance as prevailed in Ireland, it was impossible for the utmost industry or exertion to make the least advance in improvement or prosperity. The lands were held by a tenure called *Gavelkind*; that is, they were partitioned, according to seniority, among all the males of the sept; and on the death of each tenant, the several portions were thrown together, and the whole was again divided. Perverted ingenuity could not have placed a more fatal or a more impassable barrier in the path of civilization. Offering no incentive or reward to action, this custom encouraged that indolence and indifference to worldly condition, falsely called contentment, which is, unhappily, an hereditary failing of their descendants; while, to increase the demoralising power of these laws, the illegitimate son had equal claims to those of purer birth. Under such a system, the people could not be free: the great mass of the population was in a state of vassalage, little better than slavery, to their chieftains; and the dominant race, the Scotti, retained to themselves all the higher offices and dignities, leaving to the conquered tribes the mechanical arts, and all servile duties. Until the reign of Tuathal, about the year 164, the Milesians had not condescended to engage in the pursuits of trade, but had exclusively the offices of bards, heralds, physicians, &c. These were hereditary in their families, and portions of land were set apart for their support, and for education.

The earliest notices we have of Ireland describe her seas and harbours as the scene of a constant and busy trade; and yet their means of carrying on a considerable commerce were poor and inefficient. Their only vessels were boats, called *currachs*, formed of frames of wood, covered with the skins of beasts. So they were described in the account of Himilco's voyage, and such were they found, unchanged, after the lapse of more than one thousand years. Of their inland traffic little can be known—in the reign of Tuathal laws were made for its regulation, a fact which would argue its advanced condition. Traces, too, of great roads have been found, extending across the whole country from east to west. Of their knowledge of architecture we can form as little judgment. Some of their remains display the rudeness and ignorance of a barbarous people; while others, as the round towers, evince no inconsiderable acquaintance with the art, which could be acquired only in a high state of civilization. The churches of the early Christians were formed of wood, and of the same material were constructed the palaces of the kings, the beauty and magnificence of which were a favourite theme of the bards. The dwellings of the people, according to the fancies of some authors, were clefts in the rocks, caves, and the hollows of trees; but it is more probable, that the damp and filthy hut of the peasant of the present day is the hereditary abode of his race—"two thousand years have passed over the hovel of the Irish pauper in vain." Of the dress of the ancient Irish we have no certain information; but from the analogy of a later period, it is most likely that the poorer classes were half-clothed in sheepskins, while the chiefs wore short mantles of coarse woollen cloth. The short petticoat, which has probably been borrowed from the Irish by the Highlanders of Scotland and the Bracæ, were also in use at the time of the English settlement. In agriculture it would seem they had made some progress. In the Brehon laws are clauses relating to mills, to the irrigating of lands, and other farming operations. But the greater portion of the soil was devoted to pasturage; and, indeed, the nature of the tenure would effectually discourage all tillage.

Poetry was in high request amongst them. Their bards and antiquaries were a favoured and privileged caste, whose ambitious projects often plunged the nation into insurrection and confusion. Of music, too, they were passionately fond: the sweetness of the Irish harp, and the plaintive beauty of the Irish airs, have long been celebrated.

Our very imperfect and unsatisfactory information on these subjects throws a great difficulty in the path of the student of Irish history—an obstacle calculated to dishearten and disgust all but the most determined antiquaries, and the existence of which has caused the whole series of our annals to be regarded with discredit and indifference. Such is the contrast between the state of society in the dark ages of Irish history—that is, the few centuries preceding and following the introduction of Christianity—and that comparatively enlightened stage of civilization, which alone could have left those traces of knowledge and of skill in the arts to be met with in every part of Ireland, that not the most unscrupulous believer in probabilities can suppose that both are characteristics of one and the same period. To reconcile authorities so much at variance, while to neither can we refuse credit, there remains but the one hypothesis; for the theory which ascribes to the Danes all the marks of former civilization to be found in the island, cannot be supported. That people never obtained a footing in the country; they were but robbers, who held patches of the coast occasionally, to facilitate the removal of their plunder. There are, besides, many collateral circumstances, tending to show that the Irish had fallen from a condition far higher than that in which they were found at the coming of St. Patrick, and again at the invasion by the English: that the ignorance and barbarism of the people at those periods was but the effect produced by the working, through centuries, of a wretched system of government and laws, aided by their mutual jealousies and perpetual feuds.

"To attempt to reconcile—even on the grounds already suggested, of the anomalous character of the people—the civilized tastes, the skill in metallurgy, the forms of worship, which these various articles, in their several uses, imply, with such a state of things as prevailed in Ireland during the first ages of Christianity, appears altogether impossible; and the sole solution of this and other such contradictions, in the ancient history of the Irish, is that, at the time when they first became known to the rest of Europe, they had been long retrograding in civilization; that, whether from the inroads of rude northern tribes, or the slowly demoralizing effects of their own political institutions, they had fallen, like many other once civilized nations, into eclipse; and though, with true Celtic perseverance, still clinging to their old laws and usages, their Assemblies at Tara, their Colleges of Bards, the Great Psalter of their Antiquaries, yet preserving of the ancient fabric little more than the shell, and, amidst all these skeletons of a bygone civilization, sinking fast into barbarism. This view of the matter seems also remarkably confirmed by that interval of ignorance, and even oblivion, as to the state and fortunes of Ireland, which succeeded to the times of the geographer Pytheas, of Eratosthenes, and the Tyrian authorities of Ptolemy. By all these, and more especially the latter, the position and localities of that island appear to have been far better known than by Strabo or any of the later Greek authorities—a circumstance to be explained only by the supposition that those ties of intercourse, whether commercial or religious, which the Irish once maintained, it is clear, with other nations, had during this interval been interrupted, and all the light that had flowed from those sources withdrawn. Through a nearly similar course of retrogradation we shall find them again doomed to pass, after their long and dark suffering under the yoke of the Danes, when, exhausted not more by this scourge than by their own internal dissensions, they sunk from the eminent station they had so long held in the eyes of Europe, and fell helplessly into that state of abasement, and almost barbarism, in which their handful of English conquerors found them."

To our apprehension this conclusion is unavoidable and every attempt to show the ignorant and savage state of the Irish in the ages succeeding the conversion to Christianity, is but an additional argument proving the high antiquity of the nation, as it throws back to a period which even then was ancient, the civilization and knowledge of the arts which produced those numerous relics found in every part of the country, forming a testimony of the advanced state of refinement of its inhabitants, the force of which is confirmed every day by new discoveries.